

**"That ye mowe redely fynde...what ye desyre":**

**printed tables of contents and indices 1476-1550**

Malcolm Parkes observed some decades ago that 'the late medieval book differs more from its early medieval predecessors than it does from the printed books of our own day. The scholarly apparatus which we take for granted - analytical table of contents, text disposed into books, chapters, and paragraphs, and accompanied by footnotes and index - originated in...the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.'<sup>1</sup> Yet the way in which such apparatus made their way from the scholarly manuscripts of the late medieval period into more general printing has been only cursorily examined by scholars.<sup>2</sup> This article explores how the use of two elements of this apparatus, the table of contents and the index, developed in English printing before 1550. It focuses on the language that English printers used when presenting tables of contents and indices and uses this to demonstrate the value

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<sup>1</sup> Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London and Rio Grande, 1991), 66.

<sup>2</sup> For useful overviews of printing in this period see: Peter Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London 1501-1546* (Cambridge, 2013); *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, 1400-1557, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J B Trapp, (Cambridge, 1999); Henry Bennett, *English Books & Readers 1475 to 1557: Being a Study in the History of the Book Trade from Caxton to the Incorporation of the Stationers' Company* (Cambridge, 1969). Focused studies on tables of contents and indices in English printing have been limited. In addition to those specifically referenced below, see also: Mark Rabnett, "The First Printed Indexes," *Cataloguing & Classification Quarterly* 2 (1982): 87-102; Hans H. Wellisch, "The Oldest Printed Indexes", *The Indexer* 15 (1986): 73-82. However, there has been considerable interest in recent years in the provision of paratexts in print more generally. On the organisation of information see: Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2010); David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order 1450-1830* (Cambridge, 2003); Peter Stallybrass, "Books and Scrolls: Navigating the Bible" in *Books and Readers in Early Modern England: Material Studies*, ed. Jennifer Anderson and Elizabeth Sauer (Philadelphia, 2002), 42-76. On title-pages see: Margaret Smith, *The Title-page: Its Early Development, 1460-1510* (London, 2000); Eleanor Shevlin, "'To Reconcile Book and Title, and Make 'Em Kind to One Another': The Evolution of the Title's Contractual Function", *Book History* 2 (1999): 42-78; Martha Driver, "Ideas of Order: Wynkyn De Worde and the Title Page" in *Texts and Their Contexts: Papers from the Early Book Society*, ed. John Scattergood and Julia Boffey (Dublin, 1997), 37-149. On errata notices see: Alex da Costa, "Negligence and Virtue: Errata Notices and their Evangelical Use", *The Library* (forthcoming); Anthony Grafton, *The Culture of Correction in Renaissance Europe* (London, 2011); Ann Blair, "Errata Lists and the Reader as Corrector" in *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, ed. Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric Lingquist, and Eleanor Shevlin (Amherst, MA, 2007), 21-41; David McKitterick, 'A house of errors' and 'Perfect and Imperfect' in his *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order*, 97-165; and Seth Lerer, *Error and the Academic Self: The Scholarly Imagination, Medieval to Modern* (New York, 2002).

they saw in such additions. In particular, the essay reveals the ways in which writers and printers exploited the potential of these finding aids to not only market books but – in the case of early Reformation printing - to shape and constrain the ways in which readers read.

Underpinning this article is a survey of every item in the *Early English Books Online* database between 1476 and 1550, covering all printers of any significance working in London in this period, including William Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, Richard Pynson, Robert Redman, Robert Copland, William Copland, Robert Wyer, John Rastell, Peter Treveris, Julian Notary, William Faques, Richard Faques, Henry Pepwell, John Skot, Richard Bankes and Laurence Andrewe.<sup>3</sup> Although *EEBO* does not have copies of every book recorded in the *English Short Title Catalogue*, initial electronic consultation allowed a far more comprehensive and efficient survey of early printed works than would otherwise have been possible.<sup>4</sup> For instance, of the 113 items recorded by the *ESTC* as printed by Caxton, c.88% are accessible at least partially through *EEBO*. For most other printers, *EEBO* tends to be even more comprehensive with, for instance, electronic copies of c.98% of the 727 entries attributed to de Worde by the *ESTC*.<sup>5</sup>

[insert table, uploaded separately]

This approach provided a corpus of over 2000 editions for initial examination. For each of the printers surveyed, every edition with a table of contents or index was then recorded, furnishing 225 instances (11% of the total corpus), before more detailed analysis was undertaken and physical copies consulted where necessary. A further 150 editions

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<sup>3</sup> *Early English Books Online* [hereafter *EEBO*], last modified September 2016, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

<sup>4</sup> *English Short Title Catalogue* [hereafter *ESTC*], 'updated daily', <http://estc.bl.uk>.

<sup>5</sup> The percentages of *ESTC* records for each printer represented in *EEBO* are rough approximations due to the vagaries of each database's completeness, search terms and *EEBO*'s inclusion of, for instance, a printer's devices as separate records. The figures offered in tabulated form here are given only to indicate the breadth of the material examined and a printer's relative use or lack of use of tabulae and indices.

produced by continental printers in English were also examined. To avoid redundancy and repetition, the examples selected for discussion here are those that either illustrate a general trend or are unusual in their approach.

### *Manuscript Development of Finding Aids*

Malcolm Parkes, Richard Rouse, Mary Rouse and Charles Briggs have demonstrated that it was the thirteenth century desire to make major works more accessible to non-sequential reading that initially drove enthusiasm for finding aids with experiments in Paris and the Cistercian monasteries of northern France leading the way.<sup>6</sup> As the Rouses put it, 'the major works of the twelfth century, the *Ordinary Gloss* to the Bible, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, and Gratian's *Decretum*, represent efforts to assimilate and organize inherited written authority in systematic form. In contrast, the tools of the thirteenth century represent efforts to search written authority afresh, to get at, to locate, to retrieve information.'<sup>7</sup>

One such tool was the table of *lemmata* - what modern readers would call an index - which allowed readers to find and use material for their own ends.<sup>8</sup> These usually consisted of key words organized in alphabetical order, initially by the first two letters of a word. Owing to the instability of Latin spelling, it was not until the fifteenth century that alphabetical organization was extended to encompass the first four letters of those key

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<sup>6</sup> Charles F Briggs, "Late Medieval Texts and *Tabulae*: The Case of Giles of Rome, *De Regimine Principum*," *Manuscripta* 37 (1993): 253-75 at 254.

<sup>7</sup> Mary A Rouse and Richard H Rouse, "The Development of Research Tools in the Thirteenth Century," in their *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1991), 221.

<sup>8</sup> The term 'table' was used by printers to cover a wide variety of finding aids, including tables of contents and indices. 'Table' and 'tabula/tabulae' are used here to refer generally to finding aids, utilising the broad Middle English meaning of 'A columnar arrangement of written words, numbers, or symbols or some combination thereof which makes information on their relationships readily accessible'. *Middle English Dictionary*, s.v. "table (n.)", last modified 2014, <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED44346>. 'Table of contents' and 'Index' are used with their modern meanings.

words.<sup>9</sup> Each keyword would be followed by citations and a reference to help locate the relevant passage by numbered and/or lettered division, or - less helpfully for the purposes of copying - by folio and column.<sup>10</sup> At their fullest, such citations offered a short passage that gave both the context and location of that word's occurrence and could be used independently of any copy of the text.<sup>11</sup> Another kind of tabulated apparatus that became common was a list of chapter headings. 'Whereas the index provided independent access to subordinate information within a text, the[se] synoptic tables... (known as *intentiones*) emphasized the contexts in which this material appeared.'<sup>12</sup> Advantageously, such summaries were not tied to a particular copy of a text and could be easily reproduced and used with other copies.

Although tables were initially directed at a scholarly readership, they also made their way into vernacular manuscripts. Most famously, the Wycliffite Bible had extensive tables accompanied by 'instructive rubrics' which suggest that while 'the intended audience may not as yet have been very familiar with all their conventions...it was expected to be readily capable of grasping them.'<sup>13</sup> Tables of varying lengths were also added to late medieval secular manuscripts.<sup>14</sup> Kate Harris offers a partial list of Middle English manuscripts with 'added or integral tables of contents', including the Vernon manuscript miscellany; Longleat 258 (a Chaucerian compilation); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Fairfax 16 (a compilation of poems by Chaucer, Hoccleve and Lydgate); British Library, Arundel 327 (Osbern Bokenam's *Legends*

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<sup>9</sup> Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, "Layout and Presentation of the Text," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume 3 1100-1400* (Cambridge: 2008), 72.

<sup>10</sup> Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts*, 63.

<sup>11</sup> Briggs, 254.

<sup>12</sup> Parkes, "Layout and Presentation of the Text," 72-3.

<sup>13</sup> Matti Peikola, "Tables of Lections in Manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible," in *Form and Function in the Late Medieval Bible*, eds. Eyal Poleg and Laura Light (Leiden, 2013), 368.

<sup>14</sup> Julia Boffey and John Thompson, "Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts," in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, ed. Jane Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge, 1989), 286.

of *Holy Women*); Cambridge, University Library, Gg IV 31 (*Piers Plowman*); Manchester, John Rylands Library, English 2 (Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*); and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Anglais 39 (Jean d'Angoulême's copy of *The Canterbury Tales*).<sup>15</sup> Siân Echard has further drawn attention to the tables that were added to Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. She argues that they functioned as a "pre-text", preparing the reader to approach Gower's book in a particular way' and resulting in the 'reader's experience of the poem...vary[ing] considerably from version to version.'<sup>16</sup>

### *Finding Aids in Early English Printing*

Nevertheless, despite these examples, it was still relatively unusual to add a finding aid to a vernacular work when Caxton began printing and in many ways he was innovative in exploring their potential for appealing to English readers.<sup>17</sup> Over the course of his career he printed at least 24 works with tables, a little less than a quarter of his total output. These ranged in length from a single page (*STC* 3305, 1491) to 18 folios (*STC* 13440a, 1480).<sup>18</sup> The explanations that accompanied these early experiments reveal the motives behind their addition.

<sup>15</sup> Kate Harris, "Ownership and Readership: Studies in the Provenance of the Manuscripts of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*" (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, 1993), 240.

<sup>16</sup> Siân Echard, "Pre-Texts: Tables of Contents and the Reading of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*," *Medium Aevum* 66 (1997): 270-87 at 272.

<sup>17</sup> For a broader discussion of how European printers utilised *tabulae* see Ann M Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2010), 140-42. For an introduction to William Caxton see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Caxton, William (1415x24–1492)", by Norman F. Blake, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/4963; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 28-38 *et passim*. More substantial studies include: Lotte Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London, 2010), and her *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England* (London, 1982); William Kuskin, *Symbolic Caxton: Literary Culture and Print Capitalism* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 2008); Norman F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (Rio Grande, Ohio and London, 1991) and his *Caxton: England's First Publisher* (London, 1976).

<sup>18</sup> A.W. Pollard, G.R. Redgrave, W.A. Jackson et al., *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London, 1976-1991). Hereafter referred to as *STC*.

In one of his earliest publications, *The Playe of the Chesse* (STC 4920, 1474), Caxton ended his prologue by explaining that ‘for more clerely to procede in this sayd book I haue ordeyned that the chapitres ben sette in the begynnynge to thende that ye may see more playnly the mater wherof the book treateth etc’ ([A]1v).<sup>19</sup> The prologue was followed by a descriptive list of the book’s contents:

¶ This booke conteyneth .iiii. Traytes / The first trayte is of the Inuencion of this playe of the chesse / and conteyneth .iii. Chapitres.

The first chapitre is vnder what kynge this playe was founden

The .ii. Chapitre / who fonde this playe... ([A]2r)

Caxton perceived that it would increase the interest of the text’s dedicatee - George, Duke of Clarence - and potential buyers if they could see ‘more playnly’ what the book covered. He made a similar point in his edition of *Godefrey of Boloyne* (STC 13175, 1481), noting ‘the content of this boke ye shal playnly see by the table folowyng / wherof euery chapyter treateth al a longe’ (a4r).

In these texts, Caxton recognised that a book’s subject matter and scope was not always immediately apparent from the preface (if there was one) or incipit and that there was commercial advantage in revealing it. This point is made clearly in the introduction to

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<sup>19</sup> Caxton does not provide folio numbers or signatures for *The Playe of the Chesse* so hypothetical signatures are used here following *ESTC* practice. However, for some editions such as *Caton* (STC 4853, discussed below) only the first quire of preliminary (often paratextual) material is left without a signature letter so these are labelled ‘pi’ here, again following *ESTC* practice. Throughout this article folio numbers are used in preference to signatures where these have been provided by the printer, otherwise signatures are used. Quotations from early printed texts are presented as unedited transcriptions throughout with the following symbols used: \.../ for interlinear text, <...> for text lost by wear or damage, [...] for text supplied necessary for good sense, / for virgule, . for punctus, ; for punctus elevatus. y has been preserved for the ‘th’ abbreviation rather than a þ, since this reflects the printers’ usage. Expanded abbreviations are in italics.

the brief table for *The Seuen Poyntes of Trewe Loue* (STC 3305, 1491) where he explains that he provided a list of the tracts compiled within the volume ‘to thentent that wel disposed persones...maye the sooner knowe by this lityll intytelyng theeffectis of this sayd lytyll volume...as the hole content of this lityll boke is not of one mater oonly’ (C4v). Caxton once expressed a mirror anxiety that a reader would assume a table revealed everything, reminding those looking at *Caton* that there ‘is many a notable commaundement / lernynge and counceylle moche prouffitable whiche is not sette in the sayd regystere or rubrysshe’ (STC 4853, 1484, [pi]5v). But this does not seem to have been a dominant concern.

Caxton saw the advantages of tables for reading too and often pointed out how they could help locate material, especially in substantial works. He included a table in *The Cronicles of Englonde* (STC 9991, 1480), ‘to thende that euery man may see and shortly fynde suche mater as it shall plese hym to see or rede’ ([pi]2r), in *The Golden Legende* (STC 24873, 1483) ‘to thende eche hystorry lyf 7 passyon may be shortely founden’ ([pi]2r), and in *The Lyf of the Noble and Crysten Prynce Charles* (STC 5013, 1485) ‘for to fynde the more lyghtly the mater therin comprised’ (a3r). In *Tullius de Senectute* (STC 5293, 1481), Caxton also hinted at the way in which a table might help a reader to recall and relocate what they had read afterwards describing the table as a ‘remembraunce of thistories comprysed and touchyd in this present book...as in the redyng shal more playnly be sayd al a longe’ (i4r). In this way, he gave a role to the table both at the end of the reading process and at its beginning; as something that would help the reader to understand initially what would be said at more length and at the end, as a summary and prompt to memory.

However, with few exceptions, Caxton’s tables would have offered only minimal help in locating material ‘shortly’. *The Playe of the Chesse*, with its list of chapter headings and chapter numbers, exemplified their form. Since he rarely numbered folios – only the

*Confessio Amantis* (STC 12142, 1483) and *The Golden Legende* had foliated tables – chapter numbers merely provided a rough indication of where the material might be found, leaving it to readers to search for the exact location of a chapter. While Caxton sometimes used subheadings to divide tables into books or sections, as with Malory's *Morte Darthur* (STC 801, 1485), it was more usual for chapters to be listed in uninterrupted chronological order. Despite these tables offering minimal help in locating material precisely, they did have the advantage of not requiring any instruction in how to use them. This was not the case with *The Golden Legende* which required Caxton to explain that the table provided the 'leef' of each topic and that he had 'sette the nombre of euery leef in the margyne' ([pi]2r) or *Caton* which came with the rather opaque instruction that each entry 'shalle be signed as that folowed of the nombre of leues where they shalle be wreton' ([pi]3v). Only the *Polychronicon* (STC 13438, 1482) offered an alphabetically ordered tabula with topics such as 'Agamenon' or 'Cartage destroyed' followed by the book number and the chapter. This greater detail seems to owe much to manuscript models since the table is a 'rearrangement of the English tabula of the Trevisa MSS into stricter alphabetical order with additions both from his revision of the text and from his own *Liber Ultimus* (Book VIII).'<sup>20</sup>

Caxton may have also been inspired by manuscript models in creating the tabula for the *Confessio Amantis* and by continental printing for *The Golden Legende* explaining their relative complexity and detail.<sup>21</sup> It was more usual, however, for Caxton's print shop to use a

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<sup>20</sup> Ronald Waldron, ed. *John Trevisa's Translation of the Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden, Book VI*, Middle English Texts (Heidelberg, 2004), xiii.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the *Confessio Amantis*, Norman Blake argued that 'the balance of probability favours the view that Caxton had only one manuscript' at hand when preparing his edition of the *Confessio Amantis* and not, as Macaulay had initially suggested three manuscripts. This does not, however, survive. Norman F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London and Rio Grande, Hambledon Press, 1991), 198. Siân Echard discusses the differences between Caxton's table and those of surviving manuscripts and raises the possibility that he was not relying on a manuscript exemplar but simply took advantage of the extensive Latin glosses to produce his table. Echard, 276-79. Regarding the *Golden Legende*, see Auvo Kurvinen, "Caxton's *Golden Legend* and the Manuscripts of the *Gilte Legende*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 60 (1959): 353-76. While not



swift and economical method to produce tables. The compiler would scan through the text looking for chapter titles and produce an ordered list of chapter headings and numbers in sequential order. The language that is used to describe these tables sometimes brings out the source of the headings in the rubrics and subtitles of the volume. In *Caton*, Caxton describes how ‘to thende that thystories and examples that ben conteyned in this lytel book may be lyghtly founden...they shalle be sette and entytled by maner of Rubrysshe’ ([pi]3r) and later describes the table as a ‘regystere or rubrysshe’ ([pi]5v). Elsewhere, tables are introduced as ‘the table or rubrysshe of the content of chapytres’ (*Le Morte Darthur*, STC 801, 1485), a ‘table of the rubrices of this presente volume’ (*The Myrroure of the Worlde*, STC 24762, 1481, a2r; also *Caton*, STC 4853, *Fayt of Armes and of Chyualrye*, STC 7269, and *The Ryal Book*, STC 21429), ‘the table of the Rubryshes and the chapytres of the booke’ (*The Knyght of the Toure*, STC 15296, 1484) and ‘here begynnen the chapytres 7 tytles of this boke’ (*Lyf of Prynce Charles*, STC 5013, 1485, a3r).

Caxton’s practices became the model for later printers, who continued primarily to provide simple tables of chapter headings and numbers in chronological order rather than more complex finding aids. These became more useful as folio numbers were added, although this did not become the norm till the late 1520s. When folio numbers were used, references were made to the whole folio, although Berthelet tried to refine this in 1539 by referring to the ‘A’ and ‘B’ side of a folio in the table to *The Castell of Helth*.<sup>22</sup> As he explained to the reader, ‘the noumber in the Table, dothe sygnifye the leafe, and the letter

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based on any known manuscript, Jessica Coatesworth argues that the ‘design of the index is continental and similar to those in the Latin *Legenda aurea* editions: the first entry for each letter is in a large display case with all subsequent entries in standard body text.’ Jessica Coatesworth, “The Design of the *Golden Legend*: English Printing in a European Context,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 91 (2015): 21-49 at 24.

<sup>22</sup> For an introduction to Thomas Berthelet see: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. “Berthelet, Thomas (d. 1555)”, by Katherine Panzer, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/37187; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 183-188 et passim.

A, dothe sygnifie the fyrst page or syde, the letter B, the seconde page or syde' (*STC* 7643, A4v). Clearly the manuscript system of referring to openings had been abandoned by this point. Some printers experimented with using other reference systems to help readers locate material precisely, but these required more explanation while offering little advantage and do not seem to have been popular. For example, in 1485, the Saint Albans printer attempted to explain the signature system to his readers in the introduction to the *Cronicles'* table:

Here begynnys a schort 7 breue tabull on thes Cronicles And ye must vnderstand  
yat eueri leef is markid vnder with A. on . ii . iii . 7 iiii . 7 so forth to viii. all the  
letters .an what sum euer ye fynd shortli writin in this table . ye shall find openli  
in the same letter.' (a1r)

The printer then listed the topics covered followed by the signature on which they occur:

The proheme .a . ii . iii .

The warke of the first vi. dais

Adam the first man.

Eua the first woman.

Seth son to adam.

Delbora sustre to Abell.

a .iiii.

Abell son to adam.

Cayn and Calmana sustre...' (a1r)

Despite the explanation, correct use of the table required the reader to deduce further that the signature comes after the required topic and that 'a .iiii.' does not refer to the opening - as was usual in manuscript tabulae - but to the folio 'a4' recto and verso. And, while the table gives the appearance of a more accurate reference system, the reader still had to search through large tracts of material. For instance, there are twelve topics listed that occur between signatures '7 .iii....alt 9. and alt A capitall B C. 7 D...iiii.' De Worde recognised this limitation when he reprinted the *Cronycles* in 1497 (STC 9996) and improved the table by making the references more specific: for instance, rather than listing the discussion of 'Vrbanus pope' as one of twelve topics occurring over five signatures he recorded its location as C4 precisely.<sup>23</sup>

Berthelet also experimented with explaining the signature system to readers of his *Regimen sanitatis* (STC 21596, 1528), admonishing them:

To vnderstande this table / wytteth that euery lettre the alphabete in the boke  
hath .iiii. leaues / saue .f. the last queyre of the small alphabete / whiche hath .vi.  
leaues : and euery lefe is .ii. pages or sydes. The nombre that standeth at the  
lynes ende / sheweth what page or syde of the queire the thyng is in that ye  
wolde knowe. (A3v)

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<sup>23</sup> De Worde retained this version of the table in his second edition in 1502 (STC 9997). For an introduction to Wynkyn de Worde see: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Worde, Wynkyn de (d. 1534/5)", by Norman F. Blake, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/29968; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 68-71 *et passim*. More substantial studies include: James Moran, *Wynkyn de Worde: Father of Fleet Street* (London, 2003); Martha Driver, "Ideas of Order: Wynkyn de Worde and the Title Page" in *Texts and their Contexts: Papers from the Early Book Society*, eds. John Scattergood and Julia Boffey (Dublin, 1997), 137-49; Mary Erler, "Wynkyn de Worde's Will: Legatees and Bequests", *The Library*, 6<sup>th</sup> series, 10, no.2 (1988): 107-21; Henry Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde and his Contemporaries from the Death of Caxton to 1535: A Chapter in English Printing* (London, 1974); Norman F. Blake, "Wynkyn de Worde: The Early Years", *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1971): 62-9 and "Wynkyn De Worde: The Later Years", *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1972): 128-38.

This was followed by entries such as:

In the queire of .B.

¶ Howe one shulde kepe his body in helthe. i.

Thre generall remedies to conserue helthe .iii.

A speciall medicine for the syght and eies .v. (A3v)

These careful instructions - from the St Albans printer in 1485 to Berthelet in 1528 - reveal a continued expectation that readers would be unfamiliar with how signatures work and would need to be taught how to navigate texts in terms of quires, leaves, pages and sides. That there are so few experiments with this system suggests that printers readily perceived that it was easier to use folio numbers. Indeed, even Berthelet persevered with the signature method for only one further edition of the *Regimen sanitatis* in 1530 (STC 21597) before abandoning it in favor of an alphabetical index with folio references in 1535 (STC 21598, 21599).

Other experiments may show the influence of manuscript exemplars now lost. In 1506, de Worde offered the readers of Rolle's *Contemplacyons of the Drede and Loue of God* (STC 21259) a table of its 'sondry tytles' and that they might 'sone fynde' what they wanted he marked both the titles in the text and in the table 'with dyuerse lettres' (a2r). For example, 'How eche man sholde desyre to loue god' is accompanied in both the table and text by the letter A. This method of marking chapters offered a little advantage over cumbersome roman numerals until the twenty-fourth title which had to be marked AB, the alphabet having been exhausted. A more complicated example is furnished by de Worde's

1510 edition of *The Floure of the Commaundementes of God* (STC 23876). The 45-page table to this text follows the approximate order of the book, but with some chapter headings moved to provide a more logical negotiation of the material and to allow the table to function as a precis of the text as a whole. For instance, the table begins with the heading 'To loue god *with* all his herte 7 his neyghbour as hymselfe', which is then followed by headings from folios 3-11 which furnish examples of how a man 'sholde loue god with all his herte' before the compiler returns to a heading on folio 4 - 'That this commaundement compryseth vnder it ye/ thre fyrst commaundementes 7 the thre vertues theologalles' - as a conclusion to the discussion of that commandment. Each title in the table is followed by a number and letter, which indicate the precise heading, followed by the folio number: such as 'To loue god *with* all his herte 7 his neyghbour as hymselfe. i.B folio i'. In order to find material, the reader had to scan through this 45-page table, look up the folio number and then use the number and letter to find the right heading. The number is recorded at the end of each chapter title, and the letter at the beginning in the text proper. This offered a very precise and relatively easy to use system once understood. Unfortunately, de Worde's instruction follows the manuscript precedent and leaves out any mention of the folio numbers, making it rather difficult to follow: 'And for to fynde lyghtly the maters wherof this boke speketh hym behoueth to loke what nombre 7 lettre is marketh 7 gooth 7 in the nombre in the heyght of ye/ margen / 7 in those nombres 7 lettres shall be founde that yat a man demaundeth' (A2v).

While editions like these reveal some sophistication in their finding aids, less than a quarter of tables produced by English printers were organised in alphabetical order.<sup>24</sup> It was

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<sup>24</sup> In the corpus examined only 33 of the 225 editions that have a table of contents and/or index use alphabetical order.

primarily Latin or Anglo-French works that were seen as warranting alphabetical indices, though occasionally they were later translated into English along with their tables. In 1494, Pynson's edition of the Latin and Anglo-French *Natura brevium* (STC 18385) included a Latin table.<sup>25</sup> After several editions, the work was translated into English but whereas it concludes 'Here endeth Natura breuium and here after foloweth the Table', the table that follows is still in Latin and begins 'Assisa vltime presentia fo.38 / Audiendo et terminando fo.80'. Looking up the first entry would have taken the reader to the subtitled section 'A wrytte. De assisa vltime. presentationis.' (fol.38r), followed by a Latin summary of the writ and an English exposition. The table reflects the need for those reading the text to still understand key Latin terms and references and suggests that the English translation was directed at those with only pragmatic literacy in Latin.

Similarly, there were three English editions of Aesop's *Fables* printed between 1484 and 1500? (STC 175-177) all of which lacked tables, but in 1531? Treveris printed a humanist Latin text with commentary - *Aesophi Phrygis et vita ex maximo Planude desumpta* (STC 170.7) adding on the title page 'Index omnes tabulas indicabit. Addite sunt bis fabellis quaedam iucunde ac honeste fabelle, selecte ex omnibus facetiis Poggi florentini oratoris elequentissimi' and introducing the table with the words 'INDEX FABVLARVM omnium que in hoc libello continentur, secundum ordinem alphabeti'.<sup>26</sup> This table reflected the humanist endeavour of Poggio Bracciolini rather than Treveris' own initiative. Other works were

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<sup>25</sup> For an introduction to Richard Pynson see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Pynson, Richard (c.1449–1529/30)", by Pamela Neville-Sington, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/22935; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 134-38 *et passim*. More substantial studies include: Pamela Neville, "Richard Pynson, King's Printer (1506-1529): Printing and Propaganda in Early Tudor England" (PhD diss., University of London, 1990); and Stanley Howard Johnson, "A Study of the Career and Literary Publications of Richard Pynson" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1977).

<sup>26</sup> On Treveris see: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "'Treveris, Peter (fl. 1525–1532)'", by Norman F. Blake, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/27720; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 191-193 *et passim*.

accompanied by alphabetical tables, but without folio numbers. Redman's edition of *Articuli ad narrationes nouas pertinentes* (STC 818, 1539), for instance, concluded with an alphabetically ordered table of topics which are marked in the 32 folios of text by a marginal note and a manicule or printer's flower.<sup>27</sup>

On the whole though, printers avoided providing lengthy tables. This is not surprising as detailed finding aids, especially alphabetical indices, required greater effort to create and to maintain since every new edition required signatures and folios to be checked and updated. This had long been the difficulty with manuscript tabulae too. As Beryl Smalley noted, 'all kinds of devices were tried to make the index of one manuscript valid for other copies, where the leaves would not correspond' citing as an example the warning of a student of Paris, who copied Holcot's Wisdom-commentary with a table and lamented that 'the exemplar of my table was worth little, especially for the figures. Few of them are right, I think, after 100, but most are right below 100, as is clear. Believe if you will.'<sup>28</sup> Notary attempted to avoid this potentially fruitless labor for his edition of the *Cronycles* in 1504 by replacing the references to signatures that the St Albans printer and de Worde had used with running titles:<sup>29</sup>

Here begynneth a shorte and a breue table on these Cronycles / and ye muste  
vnderstande that in euery leef of the boke aboue is the tytle wherin is Pars  
prima. ii. iii. iiii. v. vi. and .vii. tytle ye come at the bookes ende 7 therby shall ye

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<sup>27</sup> On Redman see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Redman, Robert (d. 1540)", by Alexandra Gillespie, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/23261; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 183-188 *et passim*.

<sup>28</sup> Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1960), 35.

<sup>29</sup> On Notary see: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Julian Notary (b. c.1455, d. in or after 1523)" by Henry R. Tedder, revised Norman F. Blake, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/20367; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 63-7, 72-3 *et passim*.

knowe what maters conteyne in the table bytwene parte 7 parte / And so shall  
ye fynde aboue bytwene pars and pars in the margyne wryten. (*STC* 9998)<sup>30</sup>

Under this system a reader would go to the required part, and then scan for a particular chapter heading, helped by running titles that listed some of the topics within parts, such as ‘Pars — Brute — ii’ (b2r). This reduced the precision of the table but would have allowed Notary to print future editions without changing the table at all. That the next printer of the *Cronycles*, Pynson, copied de Worde’s more laborious signature system rather than Notary’s suggests he recognised the decreased utility of this method (*STC* 9999, 1510).

There could be other tensions between a printer’s desire to supply a useful finding aid and the pragmatic needs and cost concerns of the print shop. For instance, the table to the *Cronycles* that the St Alban’s printer instigated required the compositor to mark signatures on every folio, but it rapidly became the norm to mark only the first three signatures of every quire. In attempting to compromise between regular signature practice and the demands of the tabula, de Worde’s editions gave the letter of the signature at the bottom of the first three folio of every quire and put the number for every signature in the right hand margin. This created a hybrid system that was simultaneously frustrating for the reader, who had to remember or check what signature letter he was looking at after the first three, and for the compositor, who had to split his signatures across the bottom and the right hand margin on three folio and retain only signature numbers on the others. When Pynson printed his edition in 1510 (*STC* 9999), he attempted to clarify this practice and make his compositor’s work easier, explaining ‘ye must vnderstande that euery leef of the a

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<sup>30</sup> The *ESTC* notes that this is ‘known as “the Saint Albans chronicle”; not the same compilation as the “Chronicles of England” first printed by Caxton (*STC* 9991-4).



b c is marked in the margyne vndernethe .i. and .ii. and .iii. and so forth thre lefes after all the letters vnto the bokes ende.’ When folio numbers were provided they could exceed a fount’s capacities and occasionally led to compositors running out of crucial letters and numbers. For instance, in Redman’s edition of *The Boke of Magna Carta* (STC 9272, 1534) a rare alphabetical index was provided with folio numbers in arabic numerals, but by the eighth page the compositor was forced to mix these with roman numerals.

As time went on, printers increasingly included tables without explanation, introducing them only with the title ‘Tabula’ or phrases such as ‘Here foloweth the Table of this present Booke’ (*Pylgrymage of Sir Richarde Guylforde*, STC 12549, 1511, K5v) or ‘Si ensuit la table de cel present liure’ (*Littleton’s Tenures*, STC 15727, 1528, 2E6r) and concluding them with phrases such as ‘Explicit tabula’ (*Pylgrymage of Sir Richarde Guylforde*, STC 12549, 1511, K6r), ‘Finis tabule’ (*Nova legenda Anglie*, STC 4601, 1515, A6r), or ‘Thus endeth the table’ (*The Cyte of Ladyes*, STC 7271, 1521, 2A3v). By the second decade of the sixteenth century, printers seem to have increasingly expected readers to be familiar with their use. When they did introduce them at more length, the language they used helped to sell the books by emphasizing their usefulness as swift finding aids, helping the reader to ‘lightly’ or quickly find material. By this point it appears that both in Europe and in England ‘tables were highly valued by readers – printers boasted of them on title pages or apologized when they were missing.’<sup>31</sup> They might be described as ‘a table...wherby ye may lightly fynde by the folio the thing that ye wolde rede’ (*Lytell Cronycle*, STC 13256, 1520, A1v), ‘a table to fynde quyckly’ (*The Iudycyall of Vryns*, STC 14836, 1527, S2r), or ‘a shorte and a breue Table / for to fynde lyghtly wherof ony man shall please hym to rede in this

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<sup>31</sup> Blair, 142.

boke' (*Cronycles of Englonde*, STC 10002, 1528, A2r). The few French and Latin books that English printers produced with tables used similar language. For instance, Redman's edition of *Natura breuium* introduced the table with 'Tabula per quam facile inueniri possint / que scitu digna hoc opere continentur' (STC 18391, 1529, 2E5r).

Occasionally, later printers echoed Caxton's concern that a table could fail to capture the full appeal of a text and might discourage a reader who assumed it to be comprehensive. Notary reminded the reader that his edition of the *Kalender of Shepardes* has 'many mo goodly addycyons than be chapetred' (STC 22410, 1518, A2v) and Treveris firmly instructed the readers of *The Iudycyall of Vrynys* 'thynke not yat al thinges expressed in this worke to be noted in this table for yat wher to besy as by redynge you shall perceyue' (STC 14836, 1527, S2r).

All these introductions speak directly to the reader and assume the person searching the table is looking for something specific they 'wolde rede' or which would 'please hym to rede', ignoring the admixture of literacy and aurality that marked reading in this period. Yet as Robert Scribner argues 'it was not so much literacy as such that was important, but how literacy interacted with other forms of communication, especially oral forms, as well as the social context in which ideas were received and internalized.'<sup>32</sup> Only de Worde's preface to the table in his *Lyf of Saint Katherin* seems to imagine tables functioning within a more complex reception of the text. In that text, the author's preface ends with a note that the chapters have been 'compylded togyder in the begynnyng in manere of a kalendre that ye mowe redely fynde: what matere in the boke ye desyre to here or rede' (STC 24766, 1492, a1r). With an authorial preface addressed to a female religious, a 'doughter...vnder

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<sup>32</sup> Bob Scribner, "Heterodoxy, Literacy and Print in the Early German Reformation," in *Heresy and Literacy 1000-1530*, eds. Peter Biller and Anne Hudson (Cambridge, 1994), 259.

counseyll and techinge of...gostely gouernours' with 'gostely susteres', the table's introduction invites us to imagine a variety of situations in which the table might be used, ranging from an illiterate nun being read the brief two-page table by her spiritual confessor or another nun and cooperating in the selection of material to a literate nun with some authority selecting material to hear read, either privately, or more publicly. This edition reminds us that while the increasing popularity of tables may seem to speak to a rise in private reading, they may also have had a function within mixed literacy groups and aural reception too.

There are a few instances where printers seem to have thought particularly hard about how to make texts more accessible to the less learned reader through tabulae. One striking example is Peter Treveris who printed *The Vertuous Handywarke of Surgeri* (STC 13434) in 1525. The title-page of this edition itemizes the contents in a manner similar to tabula, albeit set out in a single paragraph rather than columns:

¶ The noble experyence of the vertuous handywarke of surgeri / practysed 7  
compyled by the moost experte mayster Iherome of Bruynswyke / borne in  
Straesborowe in Almayne / yat whiche hath it fyrst proued / and trewly founde  
by his awne dayly exercysynge. ¶ Item here after he hath authorysed and done it  
to vnderstande through the trewe sentences of the olde doctours and maysters  
very experte in the scyence of Surgery / As Galienus / Ipocras... ¶ Here also shall  
ye fynde for to cure 7 hele all wounded membres / and other swellynge. ¶ Item  
yf ye fynde ony names of herbes or of other thynges wherof ye haue no  
knowlege / yat shall ye knowe playnly by the potecarys. ¶ Item here shall you  
fynde also for to make salues / plasters / powders / oyles / and drynkes for

woundes. ¶ Item whoso desyreth of this science yat playne knowlege let hym  
oftentymes rede this boke / and than he shall gette perfyte vnderstandynge of  
the noble surgery.

This work was accompanied by a table describing the contents of chapters in chronological order, for example: 'Of y\ē/ flankes 7 her partyes. ca. viii.' The translator of *The Handywarke of Surgeri*, outlines his imagined reader in the prologue, explaining that he translated it out of 'duche into englishe...for y\ē/ loue 7 comferte of all them that entende to studye the noble arte of Chyrurgia', describing the text as 'very vtile and profytable to al that entende to occupye this noble sciens' (A2r). It swiftly becomes apparent, however, that he is not directing the text to university education medical practitioners. He laments that 'it is oftentymes sene and dayly chaunceth in small townes / borowghs / 7 vyllages / that lye farre from ony good cyte or great towne yat dyuerse people hurt or dyseased for lacke of connyng men / be taken in hande of them yat be barbers or yonge maisters to whome this sciens was neuer dysclosed' (A2r). It is this that drives him to encourage 'ye yonge studyntys / maysters 7 seruauntes of barbers and surgyens that entende this noble arte 7 connyng [to] beholde / ouerse / and rede with diligence this lytell boke' (A2r). The translator then makes a direct appeal to the economic wisdom of these 'yonge studyntys' by pointing out that 'ye may now for a lytell money haue gret lernynge 7 connyng to your honour 7 profyte / the whiche hereafter ye myght fortune nat to gett for ten tymes so moche golde as it sholde coste you now' (A2r).

A year later, Treveris printed *The Grete Herball* (STC 13176), explicitly pitching it as a companion to *The Handywarke of Surgeri* by describing it as giving 'full parfyte vnderstandynge of the booke lately prynted by me (Peter treueris) named the noble

experiens of the vertuous...warke of surgery.' The author explains that 'brotherly loue' compelled him to write so that 'man may be holpen *with* grene herbes of the gardyn and wedys of y\e/ feldys as well as by costly receptes of the potycarys prepayred' (+2r). To assist with this aim, the volume is accompanied by a 'register of the chaptrees' in both Latin and English with entries such as 'Anctum / dylle ca.xvi', 'Alium / garlyke ca.xviii' (although this scheme is occasionally abandoned with entries such as 'Vermicularis' and 'Vicetorium' left untranslated). *The Grete Herball* was followed the year after by Treveris' edition of *The Iudycyall of Vryns* (STC 14836, 1527), the title-page of which promises that the volume covers 'howe vryn is gendered in mans body / 7 of his qualities...colours in vryn / 7 what they signifye' and the 'contens in vryn 7 what they signifye...7 also ther causes 7 qualities...as brefly doth apere in a tabull / in the latter end of this boke.'

In short, over three years Treveris provided interested readers with three medical works that would help them to understand diagnosis and treatment, herbal and surgical. These were all printed in the same distinctive folio format with title pages that began with a block of descriptive text, taking up a third of the page, followed by a large woodcut that took up the rest of the page. The titlepages of *The Handywarke of Surgeri* and *The Grete Herball* were further visually connected by the use of both red and black in the printing, an unusual feature in English printing at this time. The use of tabulae further connected the three volumes. *The Handywarke of Surgeri* did not mention the tabula on the titlepage, but it became the model for *The Grete Herball* which followed the same format, down to placing a full page woodcut of a skeleton opposite the final entries. *The Iudycyall of Vryns'* tabula was laid out in a similar manner, though lacked the woodcut of a skeleton and seems to

have been printed after the rest of the book.<sup>33</sup> It seems that Treveris and his translator created a pair of books that complemented each other and later realised that the *Iudycyall of Vryns* could be made to seem a complement to these. It is the three tabulae that make these reference works compelling purchases, allowing easy access to a great deal of knowledge.

However, tables could be used polemically as well as to market books, controlling how large numbers of readers read rather than simply guiding them to material they desired. The writers and printers who took advantage of this potential may well have been inspired by earlier manuscript models concerned with contentious issues, such as Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*, an early fourteenth-century tract concerned with challenging ecclesiastical supremacy.<sup>34</sup> Seeing its value for Henry VIII's own claims of supremacy, Cromwell sponsored William Marshall to translate the text, which was printed by Wyer in 1535.<sup>35</sup> Like the original text, the translation (STC 17817, 1535) elevates the table from paratext to an integral part of the text's tripartite structure with the third part described as 'a table of the two fyrste dyccyons' (fol.137r). This third part then begins with a prose 'rehersall, 7 callyng to remembraunce agayne' (fol.137v) of the principal points of the first two parts. This recapitulation ends by explaining its necessity: that to stop the 'braunches, twygges, 7 graffes of dyscorde 7 stryfe...sprede any further we shall of the .ii. dyccyons aforegone brynge forth ye thyrde dyccyon...a necessarye 7 a playne, clere, 7 euydent inferryng of certayne conclucyons' (fol.137v). Marshall, as translator, not only preserved the table's

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<sup>33</sup> Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480-1535* (Oxford, 1973), no. 2397.

<sup>34</sup> For further discussion of the *Defensor Pacis*, see William Underwood, "Thomas Cromwell and William Marshall's Protestant Books", *The Historical Journal* 47 (2004): 517-539 at 519; Dennis Rhodes, "William Marshall and his Books, 1533-37", *The Library* 58 (1964): 219-31, at 225-226; and William Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535* (London, 1964), 255.

<sup>35</sup> For an introduction to Robert Wyer see: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Wyer, Robert (fl. 1524-1556)", by Norman F. Blake, last modified 2016, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/30124; Blayney, *The Stationers Company*, 197-199 *et passim*.

structural importance but the description of it bringing an end to the 'pestylence or myschefe' caused by ecclesiastical claims to supremacy, as 'ye sophystycall cause therof shall easly be excluded 7 dryuen out from realmes so þat from hensforth they shal be stopped out from hauyng entraunce in to them 7 other, communytes.' The language of exclusion, driving out, stopping up and forbidding entrance, positioned the table as a means to produce a uniform response to the question of ecclesiastical supremacy. Marsilius envisioned the table (far more than the text) doing this work by reducing length arguments to 30 clear and memorable conclusions. That this was about producing a particular kind of reading was made clearer still in the subtitle of the table which expressed the hope that by 'by the attencyon and dylygent markyng of which conclusyons prynces or gouernoures, and also theyr subiectes may the sooner: and the more easely, attayne the ende purposed and entended by this boke' (fol.138r). The table in this text, whether in manuscript or in print, was a way of preventing certain readings and ensuring that the writer's purpose was achieved.

Thomas More seems to have recognized this potential when he produced the table for his *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (STC 18085, 1530). The table summarized the content of the volume, but also made clear to the reader what ideas they should give credence to. Although the table was not explicitly presented as ensuring 'the ende purposed and entended' by the book - unlike the table for *The Defence of Peace* - it reflects a similar desire to control the reading of the *Dialogue*. In the *Dialogue's* preface, More presents the text as a written account of an encounter with his friend's messenger:

...whan I consydered what the maters were / and howe many great thyngys had  
ben treated bytwene the messenger and me / and in what maner fassyon /

albeit I mystrustyd not his good wyll / and very well trusted his wytte / his  
lernynge well seruyng hym to the perceyuyng and reportynge of our  
communycacyon: yet fyndyng our treatyse so dyuerse 7 so long / and somtyme  
suche wyse intrycate / that my selfe coulde not without labour call it orderly to  
mynd / me though I had not well done / without wrytyng / to truste his onely  
memory' (fol.1r)

Although More is claiming to be concerned about the fallible verbal record of an 'actual' conversation in this section and justifying the conceit of his work, these words foreground the same concerns we have seen in other works about readers' ability to not only recall a 'dyuerse...long' and 'intrycate' text but to do so in an 'orderly' fashion. Similarly, the reason More gives for putting the *Dialogue* in print - to prevent misrepresentations by heretics - reflects concerns that readers might 'frame' a work 'after theyr fantasyes' in conveying its gist to others:

...me thought grete parell myght aryse / yf some of that company (whiche are  
confedred and conspyred togyder / in the sowynge and settyng forth of Luthers  
pestylent heresyas in this realme) sholde malyciously chaunge my wordes to the  
worse / 7 so put in prynte my boke / framed after theyr fantasyes...For  
eschewyng wherof I am now dryuen / as I say to this thyrde busynes of  
publyshynge and puttyng my boke in prynte myselfe' (fol.1v)

The table offers the reader a useful finding aid, with both chapter and folio numbers, but it also offers a controlled precis of a long work that might counterbalance erroneous



‘memory’ and ensure an orderly report. It reiterates the suggestions made in the preface about the relative authority of the speakers and steers the reader away from taking the conceit of the text too seriously, ensuring that they do not treat the Messenger as an equal disputant to the author. Whereas the messenger’s points are presented as objections, doubts or thoughts that he ‘thynketh’, ‘allegeth’, ‘moueth’, ‘reherseth’ or ‘sayth’, the author consistently ‘sheweth’, ‘declareth’ or ‘proueth’ his points. The only occasions when the author’s arguments are presented less authoritatively are when they are limited in their scope, for instance, ‘the author toucheth one specyall prerogatye’ (Bk.2, Ch.12), or when discussing the current treatment of heretics, when the ‘the author inueheth’ (Bk.2, Ch.10, 12) against heretics and ‘sheweth his opynyon concernyng the burnynge of heretykes’ (Bk.2, Ch.14).

The *Defence of Peace* and *The Dialogue Concerning Heresies* are both concerned with the ecclesiastical and theological controversies of their time and suggest that the writers and translators of such works were particularly (and naturally) interested in controlling interpretation through tables. We can also see this impulse in evangelical works of the time. For instance, Tyndale concluded the first edition of *The Parable of Wicked Mammon* (STC 24454, 1528, Antwerp, J. Hoochstraten) with the ‘principall notes of the boke’ (14v). These follow the order of the text, but are not chapter headings. Instead, they highlight key points such as: ‘The lawe is deeth and the promises life fo.ii / The lawe when it is preached geveth no power fo fulfyll the lawe fo.ii. / Fayth when it is preached bringeth the spirite and power to fullfyll the law fo.ii’. There are a few entries that depart from this pattern and simply guide the reader to topics like ‘Good workes’ and ‘Fastynge’ or ‘The confesion of Pharaos’, but on the whole the principal notes function more like a series of evangelical theses than a table of contents. The text also begins with what was labelled in

the next extant edition 'A shorte rehearsall or summe of thys present treatyse of iustification by fayth' (STC 24455, 1536, James Nycolson). In this way the reader's experience of this short work is guided from beginning to end with key ideas picked out and highlighted.<sup>36</sup> While the prologue makes a gesture towards the reader's freedom by exhorting them to judge it by comparing 'it vnto the scripture', they are only offered two options: 'if gods worde beare recorde vnto it...geve god thankes' or 'iff gods worde condemne it...hold it acursyd'. The reader can accept or reject the theses presented, but the 'shorte rehearsall' and 'principall notes' work to constrain interpretation.

A few years later, Robert Barnes began the first edition of his *Supplicatyon* (STC 1470, 1531?, Antwerp, S. Cock) with a list of 'the comenplaces which he disputeth' and explained to the 'Christen reader' that he had added this table 'to helpe thy memorie' (U1r). These commonplaces are prominently positioned on the verso of the title page and emphasise the key arguments that he sought to make:

- 1 The first is / that Alonlye faith iustefyeth before god.
- 2 The seconde / what the church is and who be therof / and where by men may knowe her
- 3 The thirde / what the kayes of the church be 7 to whom they were geuen.
- 4 The fourth is / that the frewill of man after the faulle of Adam / of his naturall strength can do nothings but sinne.
- 5 The fite is / that it is lawfull for all maner of men to reade holy scripture

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<sup>36</sup> These notes are repeated in STC 24455.5 (1537), but STC 24455 lacks these notes and instead begins with 'A shorte rehearsall or summe of thys present treatyse of iustification by fayth' which is the analogy of a married couple that begins other editions.

6 The sixte is / that mennes constitucions which be not grounded in scripture  
binde not the conscience of man vnder the payne of deedlye sinne.

7 The seventh is / that al maner of christened men / both spirituall and  
temporall are bounde when they wil be howseled to receyve the sacrament in  
both kindes vnder the payne of deedlye synne.

8 The eight proueth that it is agenst scripture to honoure images and to praye to  
sayntes. (A1v)

These commonplaces ensured that the reader would understand the text as Barnes intended regardless of the reader's stamina, interpretative ability, or memory. Like Tyndale in *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, he also offered a more detailed precis. Having discussed the purpose of the table of commonplaces, he went on to say:

...and that thou mayste the more easelye finde that thou desirest. wherein I haue  
also sette out the most notable saynges of doctoures and of the popes lawes  
whych are alleged in the boke afore / so that this table ys in a maner a summe  
and shorte rehershall of the hole boke. (U1r)

Although evangelical writers frequently claimed to be offering freedom to their readers - illuminating what was shrouded in darkness, unlocking the secrets of the gospel - these tables reveal this as a rhetorical position and reflect Luther's own growing concern to control the response of the unlearned to his arguments. As Richard Gawthrop and Gerald Strauss argue, 'a survey of Luther's words...shows him favouring the principle of "every man his own Bible reader" until about 1525, then falling mostly silent on the subject and, at the

same time, taking actions that effectively discouraged, or at least failed effectively to encourage, an unmediated encounter between Scripture and the untrained lay mind.<sup>37</sup> These actions included publishing 'works of popular indoctrination, above all the two catechisms of 1529', which were both popular and 'by far the most effective, efficient and above all the safest means of instilling in the multitude a reliable knowledge of religion - that is to say, of the officially formulated creeds of the Lutheran state churches.'<sup>38</sup> It seems plausible that the English evangelicals' liking for tables of principal notes reflects a similar interest in effective, efficient and safe instruction.

Tyndale's *Exposition on Matthew* exemplifies this tension between the rhetoric of making readers free and controlling their reading and interpretation. The title page of the first edition, (Antwerp? J. Grapheus?, STC 24440, 1533) describes Matthew 5-8 as 'the keye and the dore of the scripture' and the prologue extends this language to the exposition itself, drawing an implicit parallel between Christ and Tyndale who 'openeth the kingedome of heauen', 'restoreth the keye of knowledge', 'wedeth out the thornes and busshes...wherwith they [scribes and pharasees] had stopped vp the narow waye and strayte gate' (fol.2r). Ten folios later, the prologue ends by reiterating that the Exposition will give the reader 'an intraunce and open waye into the rest of all the scripture. wherin and in all other thinges the spirite of verite gyde the and thyne vnderstandynge' (fol.12r). The mention of the 'spirite of verite' as a guide to true interpretation hints at an anxiety about how the reader will fare with un-exposed texts with the less explicit guidance of the Holy Ghost. This anxiety is also revealed in the tension between the language of openness and the way in which the text directs the reader, offering only a 'narow waye' of

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<sup>37</sup> Richard Gawthrop and Gerald Strauss, "Protestantism and Literacy in Early Modern Germany," *Past and Present* 104 (1984): 34.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

interpretation. This is apparent even in the title page which tells the reader that ‘before the booke, thou hast a prologe very necessarie, contaynyng the whole somme of the couenaunt made betwene God and vs...And after thou hast a table that ledeth the by the notes in the margentes, vnto all that is intreated of in the booke.’ The prologue’s summation, combined with the marginal notes and the table ensure that the reader’s attention is drawn repeatedly to the ideas Tyndale wished to emphasize; before, during and after the initial encounter with the text.

The table itself is an alphabetical compilation of the marginal notes, headed by a keyword, with folio and side numbers. Some of the entries would help the reader locate discussion of particular topics, such as ‘Baptyme fo.lxxviii. s.ii’, but others are terse arguments in themselves, such as ‘Ceremonies: He that breaketh vnite for zeale of ceremonyes, vnderstandeth not the lawe fo.xcviii. s.ii’. A reader scanning this table would be instructed in key evangelical ideas regardless of what they were actually seeking. The directive power of this table was unintentionally recognized by the compositor of Redman’s 1536? edition of the *Exposition on Matthew* (STC 24441.3). In all other editions, the table was introduced as ‘The table which shall leade you to all thynges conteyned in this booke’ (fol.115r), but the compositor of STC 24441.3 introduced it as ‘the table whiche shall *sende* you to all thynges conteyned in this boke’ (fol.109r, emphasis mine). It is a subtle and probably unconscious change caused by an ‘l’ being read as a long ‘s’, but one that reflects a larger shift in evangelical writing between guiding the reader to directing them increasingly strictly.

After Caxton’s early experiments, English printers clearly came to value the marketing potential of tables and to use them to capture readers’ attention as well as to subtly reframe editions to their best effect. At the same time, the urgency of the

Reformation encouraged authors to utilize such paratexts more in directing and controlling their readers' experience of their work, shaping not just the initial encounter with the text but the remembrance of it. Paying close attention to the development of this 'scholarly apparatus which we take for granted' in printed books exposes the extent to which we also take it for granted that tables of content and indices are neutral additions to texts, rather than highly crafted and potentially polemical works.